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Title: Demodernizing psychology: first approximations to psychology from Latourian philosophy

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Keywords: symmetric anthropology; political epistemology; modern dualisms; psychology

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Demodernizing psychology: first approximations to psychology from Latourian philosophy

David Antolínez¹

Abstract

What would be required to dismantle modern psychology? How could it be purged the pervasive dichotomies that turned this discipline highly asymmetrical? Could we focus on the practices of hybridization to reformulate psychology as a non-modern science? This overreaching project will be explored in a series of four essays. This first piece will begin by describing the difference between the approaches of classic epistemology and Latourian philosophy to scientific activities in general and psychology in particular. Then it will explain in greater detail the symmetric anthropology used by Latour to depict the Modern Constitution and its dualistic influence in the sciences. Not only is psychology problematic due to its deeply rooted dichotomies, but mainly because it plays a pivotal role in this Modern Constitution. The essay finishes by exploring alternatives proposed by Latour to achieve a symmetrical metaphysics, which consequentially would lead to a reformation of psychology itself.

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Introduction

It is no secret that psychology has a troublesome relationship with philosophy of science. Popper labelled psychoanalysis as pseudoscience for not being a falsifiable theory, Putnam dismissed behaviourism for being unable to ascertain a relation between environmental stimuli and mental representations, Churchland critiqued cognitivism for grounding its explanations on non-material entities; and so on... Despite the efforts of psychologists to emulate natural science, this discipline has been constantly repudiated by classic epistemology

– which was mostly concerned with establishing a criterion to separate ‘Science’ from other kinds of cultural knowledge.² It is questionable that a normative approach is the best navigation route. Fortunately, due to the work of Kuhn³, epistemologists recognized that science was not exclusively cognitive, but also involved a set of social and historical factors. Subsequently, epistemology morphed into science and technology studies (STS)⁴, a novel field that descriptively examines scientific disciplines. Thus, STS approximated psychology in a different manner than epistemology. For in-

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²Epistemology is “schizophrenic”; that is, obsessed with the internal fragmentations it has imposed upon itself. See Hélène Mialet, “Where would STS be without Latour?” *Social Studies of Science* 42, no. 3 (March 2012): 457.

³Kuhn was inspired by Piagetian and Gestalt psychology, but ironically he regarded psychology as an “immature discipline”; cfr. Kuhn, *The Road Since Structure*, 223.

⁴For a comprehensive account of this transformation, see Fuller, *Philosophy, Rhetoric, and the End of Knowledge*.

stance, some sociologists drew resources from cognitive psychology to examine the daily activities of research communities⁵, while other authors turned the work of psychologists into topics of ethnographic inquiry.⁶ Since STS moved away from normativity, those examinations of psychology did not raise the question “is it scientific or not?” – but rather they asked how the practices of psychology articulate both scientific and non-scientific features.

In this essay I will examine psychology – taken broadly as a unitary discipline, even if it is not – from the lens of Latourian philosophy. Bruno Latour, one of the pioneers of STS, openly rejected the demarcation project of epistemology – usually founded on the opposition between *episteme* (knowledge) and *doxa* (belief). He argued that the study of ordinary scientific practices revealed that rationalism and methodological purism were philosophical fictions. Rather, the daily work of scientists consists of the assemblage of heterogeneous resources – including rhetorical devices, trained techniques, instruments, inscriptions, etc. These ideas eventually became the tenets of actor-network theory (ANT), a fruitful sub-program within STS that overreached to social science in general. Moreover, Latour not only exhorted for ethnographic descriptions of science, but he also ventured into a metaphysical matrix named symmetric anthropology (SA).⁷ Latourian philosophy provides several insights to explore the complexities of science, so it might be promising to employ it to scrutinise psychology. In the next section, I will expose the principles of SA and the problematic place of psychology in Latourian philosophy. In the

last part, I will ponder the reasons to pursue a re-configuration of psychology from this perspective. STS presents an opportunity for psychology to become more transparent to itself, but we must proceed with caution – because if we take Latourian philosophy as our guide, we might discover that psychology itself should undergo a *metanoia* to properly understand its place in the world.

Epistemological and political assessment of psychology

One might be accustomed to the epistemologists’ contempt towards psychology, but such scorn pales in comparison with the hostility of Latour. As we saw, STS authors dismiss epistemology, since it crafted an idealized portrait of science. But while some STS pioneers were sympathetic to psychology, Latour was particularly reluctant to any ‘cognitive explanation’ of science. Those accounts not only reinforced the myth of rationalism but also served as a façade for the complex – often unequal – social interactions that composed the processes of perception, representation, thought, language, etc.⁸ The early Latour asserted that the category of ‘mind’, akin to both epistemology and psychology, should be banned from STS. He even proposed a ten-year moratorium on ‘mental explanations’ of science, since ethnographic descriptions were enough to replace the dual program of epistemology-psychology.⁹ This is a significant shift of perspective: whereas the conventional history of philosophy holds epistemology and psychology as irreconcilable, Latour defined them as two sides of the same

⁵David Bloor, “The strengths of the strong programme,” *Phil. of the Social Sciences* 11, no. 2 (June 1981): 199; Harry Collins, “The TEA set: tacit knowledge and scientific networks,” *Social Studies of Science* 4, no. 2 (April 1974): 168; Amann and Knorr-Cetina, “Thinking through talk,” *Knowledge and Society* 8, (1989):4.

⁶Perry, *The Human Nature of Science*, 106; Devereux, *From Anxiety to Method*, 277. These studies are quite exceptional, since they appeared some years before the birth of STS.

⁷I regard Latourian philosophy as the compound of ANT and SA – the former being the empirical branch and the latter its conceptual counterpart.

⁸Latour and Woolgar, *Laboratory Life*, 274.

⁹Latour, *Science in Action*, 247.

coin. On the one hand, epistemology uses the concept of ‘mental representation’ to explore how humans acquire truthful knowledge of nature, but, on the other, psychology uses the notion of ‘mind’ to explore the inner world of the subject where false beliefs and fantasies dwell. Taking the opposite direction of those who despised psychology for not being ‘scientific enough’, Latour saw psychology as “the most modernized of the sciences”¹⁰ – but far from being a compliment, this claim was a harsh critique!

To better understand this discomfort with the category of ‘mind’, it would be instructive to revisit the Latourian interpretation of the experiment on syllogisms carried out by Aleksandr Luria.¹¹ Luria presented to unschooled farmers the following premises: ‘In the far north all bears are white; Novaya Zemlya is in the far north. What colour are the bears there?’ Their typical answer was ‘I don’t know, since I have not been there’. According to Luria, the lack of alphabetization inhibited the cognitive development of these people, who retained a concrete style of thought and therefore were unable to perform abstractions. This verdict installed an asymmetry among literate citizens and ignorant farmers since the access to formal education in the Soviet Union was masked as a difference in the ‘mental capacities’ of the population. In other words, psychology obscured a political issue and added a layer of mysticism by appealing to ‘mental’ phenomena. Fortunately, the experiment was replicated years later by Cole and Scribner, who were more sensitive to social explanations of cognition. Instead of concluding that the farmers were less capable than the citizens, they explored further the chains of reasoning employed by both parties. In formal education, children are trained to think about things that are not usually present

in the classroom, which enhances the ability to think beyond the immediate context. Just the opposite happens in rural life, where learning occurs through the engagement with objects ready-to-hand. The symmetrical conclusion was that diverse environments promoted different types of reasoning in the children, who would eventually solve syllogisms in multiple ways.

We might reply that even if psychology had problematic theories, experiments and applications in the past, this obstacle might be solved with a strengthened political consciousness. Yes, Freudian views were a bit misogynist, Watson had authoritarian phantasies of social engineering, Milgram’s studies on obedience were harmful, etc... But we cannot hold the scientists responsible for the way ill-intentioned people used their findings. Like other sciences, psychology has a dark history – but that should not be a reason to discard it!

This objection is fair, but it misses the point. Psychology is “the most modernized of sciences” because it is the prompter to fall into asymmetries – not because it has been misused. We should delineate what the French philosopher meant by ‘asymmetry’ and how to avoid it, but note that this step takes us beyond the initial framework in which we contrasted epistemology and STS. Several researchers in the ANT sub-field developed empirical studies of science, registering the (ab)use of asymmetric explanations, disguised rhetorical manoeuvres and the articulation of socio-technical networks. Yet Latour went beyond and ventured ambitious speculations of modernity itself with his SA. He complained that the networks described by STS were constantly misunderstood due to the taxonomies of modern thought that eagerly discriminate between na-

¹⁰Latour, “Reflections on Etienne Souriau’s *Les différents modes d’existence*,” 322.

¹¹Latour, *Science in Action*, 196–8. The precision of this interpretation of Luria and Cole could be doubted – yet it suffices in illustrating the discomfort with asymmetries in psychology. I thank Masato Fukushima, who pointed out this issue in a personal communication via email, August 22, 2022.

ture, society and discourse.¹² Such frequent misunderstandings lead him to examine the inconsistencies between the (self)accounts of the moderns and their actual practices. On the one hand, moderns tell stories of social progress, secularization, scientific rationality and technical dominance. But simultaneously, on the other hand, moderns quietly performed experiments that gave birth to hybrids that indiscriminately mix semiotic, social and natural phenomena. Latour named the former set of practices the work of purification and the latter the work of translation. Hence, psychology is the “most modernized science” because it is the discipline that most highlights purification, leaving unexplored its hybridization practices.

The fascination with purification began in the sixteenth century when authors such as Descartes and Locke crafted a new metaphysical matrix that differentiated modernity from the Middle Ages. Purification is characterised by arranging a series of dichotomies – *res cogitans/extensa*, primary/secondary qualities, noumena/phenomena, transcendental ego/things-in-themselves, nature/culture, fact/fiction, matter/symbols, object/subject, body/mind, freedom/determination, inside/outside world, etc. – in a monumental effort to establish an *a priori* division between allegedly incommensurable domains of reality. This interconnected web of dualisms that elucidates purification and obscures translation was graciously named by Latour as the ‘Modern Constitution’. The discourse of purification served emerging modern societies to shape a victorious identity in opposition to the barbarism of non-Western tribes and the obscurantism of the past.¹³ For our purposes, it would be useful to see a simple example of how dichotomies were employed in the dual program epistemology/psychology. Wittgenstein, for example, critiqued psychoanalysis for mis-

taken reasons and causes in its theory of free association. Still, Freud insisted that the manifest content of the dream was superfluous when compared to the latent repressed desires. Despite that the two authors disagreed about the validity of psychoanalysis, they both arranged their arguments according to the dictum of the Modern Constitution; namely, to employ dichotomies to outcast opponents.

Dualism is not, *per se*, what is at stake in Latourian philosophy, but rather how dichotomies produce asymmetries. The philosopher who holds (logical) causes will always be able to repudiate the psychologist who deals with (common sense) reasons. Likewise, the psychoanalyst who understands the (deeper) latent content of the dream will always have an advantage over the patient who merely notices the (surface) manifest content. It bears repeating: dualism is not the obstacle to overcome, but asymmetry. Incidentally, modern philosophy also has a long tradition of authors who tried to escape dichotomies appealing to monism, but remaining asymmetrical. What is the use of radical materialism if someone like Churchland praises neurosciences and condemns cognitivism? Or what is the emancipatory power of critical sociology – i.e., Marxism – if someone like Guattari dismisses psychotherapy for being a device of bourgeois ideology? Psychology has suffered the asymmetric treatment of epistemology, yes, but it has produced asymmetries as well. For instance, Oskar Pfungst appealed to the difference between ‘autonomous action’ and ‘influenced behaviour’ to attribute intelligence solely to humans and define animals as reactive beings.¹⁴ This kind of judgment advanced by Luria or Pfungst illustrates how psychology has profited from the discourse of purification. After Latour revealed how the work of purification eclipses the work of translation, he asked if another

¹²Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern*, 8.

¹³*Idem.*, 35.

¹⁴Viciane Despret, “The body we care for,” *Body & Society* 10, no. 2 (June 2004): 115.

metaphysical matrix – i.e., a Non-modern Constitution – was possible.¹⁵ This is the question I pretend to apply to the domain of psychology hoping that, once purged from its asymmetric habits, this discipline can better understand its epistemic features and redirect its scientific practices to new horizons.

Again, we could object that SA has gone too far with its pretensions to reset modernity. After all, it is not new this discontent with metaphysical dualisms, normative epistemology, scientism and political inequities – yet not even the fiercest critics of psychology have advocated for its defenestration. Did Latour really suggest that any science embedded in the Modern Constitution would be hopelessly asymmetrical? Is it necessary to remake the entire world anew? Can't we just construct a better psychology without throwing the baby out with the bathwater? In the next section, I will discuss the (general) proposal of the French philosopher to avoid the Modern Constitution and adapt it to the (particular) case of psychology. Only then we might determine if the re-configuration of psychology is a worthy enterprise.¹⁶ But a clarification is needed. SA first appeared in *We Have Never Been Modern*, a work that accentuated the practices excluded from the modern discourse of purification, progress and humanism. In a late book, *An Inquiry Into Modes of Existence*, Latour shifted his first position and offered a cosmology based on ontological pluralism.¹⁷ But right between those books, the French philosopher re-formulated the scheme of the Modern Constitution in *Pandora's Hope* as we can see in Fig 1:

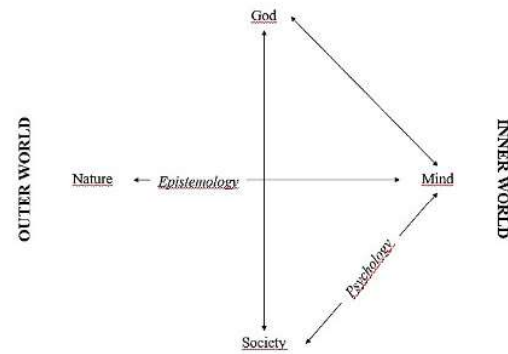


Figure 1: *The place of psychology in the Modern Constitution.*

The vertical axis, with God opposed to Society, refers to the conflict between transcendence and immanence. The horizontal axis, with Nature opposed to Mind, denotes the tension between the ‘world out there’ of objectivity and the ‘internal life’ of subjectivity. The first formulation of the Modern Constitution focused on the middle domain between the poles of nature and society. This second version has the advantage that it illustrates the asymmetries of the ‘mental explanations’ of science and politics. On the one hand, epistemology links ‘mind’ to objectivity to claim that the rational scientific method is the only secure path to decipher the Book of Nature; but, on the other, psychology links ‘mind’ to subjectivity to denounce the unconscious desires, ideological alienations and false beliefs of humanity. Latour stated: “there is no sense in talking independently of epistemology, ontology, psychology, and politics. [...] We do not claim that these spheres are cut off from one another, but rather that they all pertain to the same settlement.”¹⁸ In other words, psychology is not problematic because it is influenced by dualism, but rather because the dual

¹⁵Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern*, 138–42.

¹⁶Stengers and Latour, “The Sphinx of the Work,” 22.

¹⁷Interestingly, the seventh chapter of this book contains the most systematic discussion of psychology offered by Latour. However, in this essay I focus on the early Latour, leaving his late writings for another pieces.

¹⁸Latour, *Pandora's Hope*, 14.

program epistemology-psychology is at the core of the Modern Constitution. Other sciences like physics, biology or sociology can pass the shibboleth of SA without being utterly transformed, but modern psychology cannot remain immune.

The promise of a non-modern psychology

After dissecting the metaphysical matrix of modernity, Latour proposed a Non-modern Constitution to replace it: “a non-modern is anyone who takes simultaneously into account the Modern Constitution and the populations of hybrids that it rejects and allows to proliferate.”¹⁹ The non-modern is close to the pre-moderns since he never stopped recognizing the ontological status of the hybrids and the perpetual co-production of nature and society. The non-modern, however, still shares the modern efforts to articulate networks that are pivotal in the stabilization of hybrids. And, similarly to post-moderns, the non-modern does not long for universal (meta)narratives – albeit he avoids nihilism. In its simplest form, the Latourian intuition is that the world is changing so deeply that it calls into question the way we have been thinking of ourselves. In this line, I coin the term ‘demodernized psychology’²⁰ to suggest a possible reconfiguration of the discipline akin to SA. It is still unclear what a demodernized psychology would look like, but we can begin to explore what would be the steps required to leave the asymmetries that have been damaging psychology – and turning it into a dangerous discipline.

Dualism, as we observed, is a ubiquitous web that overlaps manifold dichotomies to strengthen the asymmetries of purification. Latour especially focused on three dichotomies – Nature/Society, Object/Subject and Matter/Symbol. This triad is of special interest to those who work in metaphysics. Certainly, each dichotomy is a rabbit hole that demands deeper explorations, but due to the constraints of space, we shall limit ourselves to an overall review.

First, Latour claimed that natural phenomena – like anthrax bacilli, scallops and TRF hormones²¹ – are never isolated, since they require other actors to become (ontologically) stabilized and then (epistemologically) studied. Here we return to an STS axiom: there is no univocal demarcation between natural and societal factors since in each local setting these discriminations are constantly negotiated. The romantic ideal of a pure ‘Nature’ and the notion of a self-contained ‘Society’ are equally misleading. For SA, instead, there are only collectives that involve natural, technical, social and semiotic components. Secondly, the dichotomy Object/Subject can be seen – at least for now – as the decrease of the conflict between nature and society to an individual level. If nature and society are co-produced, then we can no longer speak of the human subject as if it were a brain in a vat, nor of the natural object as if it was an inert body²² (more below). Thirdly, the dichotomy Matter/Symbol alludes to the concern of modern philosophy to differentiate being and language, ontology and epistemology, etc. Here, the French philosopher explains that correspondence theories have been

¹⁹Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern*, 47.

²⁰This expression is borrowed from Graham Harman, “Demodernizing the Humanities with Latour,” *New Literary History* 47, no. 2 (Spring & Summer 2016): 270. I prefer ‘demodernize’ (verb) instead of ‘non-modern’ (noun), since it emphasises the effort – similar to reverse engineering – to dismantle asymmetries and to re-assemble psychology.

²¹Those are the subjects first studied by ANT. Interestingly, this argument also applies to technological objects, like the Portuguese vessels and Boyle’s air-pump.

²²Latour, *Pandora’s Hope*, 4-17. The first chapter of this book contains a deconstruction of Descartes’ isolated res cogitans and the rather bizarre idea of the ‘world outside’.

mistaken in trying to establish a linear relation between the object ‘outside in the world’ and the representations created ‘inside the mind’. Despite the claims of naturalists and phenomenologists alike, material entities do not directly interact between them any more than symbols do. The only interaction possible is the alignment of several mediators who can faithfully represent – or betray – the interests of those entities connected.²³ Instead of a linear correspondence, SA seeks to understand the different circuits that allow actors to gain and distribute their agencies. For Latourian philosophy, the gap between categories defended by dualism should not be reduced by colliding both parts into a single term – on the contrary, differences must be multiplied and faith leaps should be taken at every step.

This sketchy summary – discounting the abundant objections it might raise – is enough to see that demodernizing is no easy task. We could try to replicate these major arguments of the French philosopher in the domain of psychology. This approach of importations and exportations, whilst familiar to STS, would imply a whole program of investigation. Is it possible to find a shortcut? In supplement with the ideas discussed so far, we could follow the loose hints left over by the French philosopher in other writings focused on psychology. Instead of taking the dichotomies Nature/Society, Object/Subject and Matter/Symbol as starting points, we might prefer three key asymmetric dichotomies of particular interest to psychology – Body/Mind, Mastery/Emancipation and Interiority/Exteriority. Again, these issues demand careful examinations, but for now, we must limit ourselves to a highly imperfect general examination.

The dichotomy Body/Mind has haunted psychology for centuries. Neither materialism nor phenomenology are useful solutions since

monism can also be asymmetrical. Those who claim the primacy of the brain and those who deal only with unconscious fantasies are equally clueless in the face of the hybrids. Both perspectives only reinforce the idea of an ‘internal world’ – the conundrum of the brain *inside* the skull which is managed *from within* by a ghost. To counteract this reductionism, Latour insisted that a body – or better, the articulation of bodies – goes way beyond a single brain; equally, the social distribution of cognition – remember Cole and Scribner – surpass drastically the notion of individual self.²⁴ The French philosopher offered an interpretation of the DSM to illustrate his point: “without the scientific societies that support the standardization, without evaluation protocols, without health insurance companies, it would not be possible to identify any given disorder in the patients.”²⁵ Yes, there are brain cells and unconscious fantasies in the patient, but this is not the whole picture. The networks that traverse the multiple manifestations of the soul are indispensable to defining the phenomena that psychologists have searched unsuccessfully in the skull or the Id. This is not to say that there is a set of *purely* psychological phenomena that is inevitably related to other *purely* biological or sociological factors. Rather, translation precedes purification – meaning that the mind appears only as the result of the assemblage of hybrids like the DSM.

Secondly, Latour exposed that psychology has been caught up in the ever-lasting discussion about human freedom. As we saw, the object is not an inert body in opposition to an autonomous subject. This portrait of the free human surrounded by a world ruled by the causal laws of physics has shaped both modern politics and social sciences. Sociologists and psychologists alike, offspring of the masters of suspicion, usually reify both nature and soci-

²³*Ibid.*, 70.

²⁴Latour, “¿Excarcelar los cuerpos?” 231.

²⁵*Ibid.*, 230.

ety to construct a clockwork cosmology which is simultaneously meaningless and almighty.²⁶ Either the human is captive of instincts, genes and synapsis or he is bounded by the structures of culture, language and economy. The signature anti-fetichism of modernity, in the hands of psychology, has led to an unexpected outcome. Facing the death of God, humanity has found freedom to create nature and culture, only to fall again into the command of these novel deities. Psychology can be seen as a tool in the mission to emancipate the self from his environmental conditionings, irrational tendencies and peremptory emotions – yet it is psychology the discipline that has stressed the most the monumentality of those powers that subjugate the self. One axiom of ANT is that no actor has inherent agency but gains the possibility to act through alliances. In this sense, the question is not if the subject is his own master or if he is a marionette manipulated by invisible hands.²⁷ Instead, psychologists should question what associations enhance or paralyze the possibility of being a mediator through which action passes. Interdependency is the name of the game, not the endless oscillation between mastery and emancipation.

Third, the dichotomy Interiority/Exteriority was proposed by Latour after a short visit to the ethnopsychiatric centre of Tobie Nathan. Once we start to recognise the networks of the production of subjectivities, two questions appear: 1) are psychological phenomena transitory or fixed? and 2) do they exist in a register of reality that does not correspond to the outer or the inner world? The French philosopher provided another curious illustration: psychi-

atric pharmacology transforms the soul, even if it is made of entirely different materials and comes from an overseas laboratory instead of the “depths of the self.”²⁸ When Latour saw the healing techniques deployed by Nathan in the artificial setting of his consulting room, it was clear that the souls do not resemble subjectivities anymore. What strange kind of beings are those? How can they produce in us a pervasive feeling of “self-possession” so strong to make us believe in the “indivisibility of personal identity”?²⁹ And how can they, in the same breath, manifest a highly transitory nature? A demodernized psychology must begin by returning to be basic ontological question: what type of entity is the soul?

Now we have drafted a navigation route. It is uncertain if we will arrive at unexplored continents or if – like Columbus – we will encounter an already occupied land. Latour himself admitted: “there is no philosophy capable of serving as a home for such [psychic] beings, at least not under present conditions.”³⁰ The dichotomies Body/Mind, Mastery/Emancipation and Interiority/Exteriority are closely tied to psychology and allow us to explore its ontological particularities. Under the scope of classic epistemology and even STS the questions still revolved around the knowledge produced by psychology. Somehow, the very subject of study – i.e., the psychological phenomena – was left untouched. We have raised the questions of how psychisms³¹ exist beyond the brain and the mind, how they produce effects that do not resemble mastery nor emancipation, and how they occupy spaces that are not external or internal. With this new perspective, we must

²⁶Latour, *On the Modern Cult of the Factish Gods*, 12–16.

²⁷Latour draws from Callon’s analysis of markets, Legendre’s mixture of psychoanalysis and jurisprudence, Gibson’s concept of ‘affordance’ and Hennion notion of ‘attachment’ – the invisible hands of economy, law, perception and affection. *Ibid.*, 54–61.

²⁸Latour, “¿Excarcelar los cuerpos?” 227.

²⁹Stengers and Latour, “The Sphinx of the Work,” 55.

³⁰Latour, “¿Excarcelar los cuerpos?” 228.

³¹‘Psychism’, ‘psychogenic beings’, ‘psychotropic’ and ‘psyches’ are terms that decenter the apparent stability of ‘psychological phenomena’. See Latour, “Reflections on Etienne Souriau’s *Les différents modes d’existence*,” 322.

necessarily address the origins, development and decay of those psychisms. In other words, which is the ‘ontological envelope’ of the psyche?³² A soul is not a transcendental substance, but a highly specific being born under particular circumstances that might perish if it is not carefully stabilized, maintained and studied.

Conclusion

We began this quest trying to escape from the oppression of epistemology, with the hope that STS would render the particular epistemic features of psychology less obscure. Guided by Latourian philosophy, we realised that psychology was deeply embedded in the Modern Constitution, where the dry discourse of purification cast the curse of ‘pseudo-science’ and forbade psychology to reflect on the hybrids that inhabited its practices. In this essay, I have merely sharpened the focus of the problem by demonstrating how psychology and epistemology are two heads of the same chimera. The allure of purification has blinded this beast, making it (ab)use the dichotomies of modern philosophy – especially Body/Mind, Mastery/Emancipation and Interiority/Exteriority. Latourian philosophy has only indicated a thin path, across the Red Sea and into the desert, that might lead psychology to a more symmetric stance. We are yet quite far from the promised land of a demodernized psychology since we must get rid of all the pretensions of purification and then outline the translations, networks and ontological modes of psychology. It would be tempting to despair and cry:

If only we had died by the epistemology’s hand in the land of the Modern Constitution! There we sat around pots of meat and ate all the food we wanted, but you have brought us out into this desert to starve to death!³³

Still, it would be unwise to reverse our steps – we must enter the desert and experience a *metanoia*. Once freed from the chains of epistemology and reformulated in a symmetric perspective, demodernized psychology will flourish and send its offspring into new directions.

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³²*Idem.*, 323.

³³A slight variation of Exodus 16:3.

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